United Nations

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General is informed by his assistant, Giandomenico Picco, that British hostage, Jack Mann, is released in Beirut.

- General Assembly is addressed this morning by Presidents of Lebanon and Republic of Korea; and the Foreign Ministers of Netherlands, Soviet Union and France. Among this afternoon's speakers are King of Swaziland, President of the Marshall Islands, Foreign Ministers of Finland, Portugal and Japan.

- United Nations inspection team is detained in Baghdad when refusing to surrender copies of important documents on Iraqi nuclear programmes.

- United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador reports that persistance of armed conflict and its escalation in certain parts of country is affecting fundamental rights of Salvadorian people.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar has been informed by his assistant, Giandomenico Picco, of the release today in Beirut of British hostage Jack Mann.

Spokesman Francois Giuliani announced today that the Secretary-General was encouraged by this further step in a process which he hoped would lead to a "full, speedy and satisfactory solution of the problem of all detainees and missing persons". The spokesman said Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar would continue his efforts and was confident that he could count on the continued cooperation of the groups in Lebanon and of the Governments which have been assisting him so far.

The spokesman told correspondents earlier today that the Lebanese Revolutionary Justice Organization had informed United Nations officials of their decision to release the British national. A communiqué issued by the organization said that in order to facilitate the release of Mr. Mann, they had asked the Secretary-General's delegate, Giandomenico Picco, to be in the hotel "on time".

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Mr. Giuliani read excerpts from the communiqué saying that the United Nations, represented by the Secretary-General and many other mediators, "had done a hard job to save any failure, and they tried to reach solutions which might be a common point to all the factions". The communiqué declared that the Secretary-General acted in a useful way which gave a good result towards releasing the British pilot, "as the first step in the following future phase, aiming at closing the file of the hostages and the prisoners".

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The General Assembly continued its general debate this morning hearing statements of two Heads of State and three Foreign Ministers.

Opening today's debate, the President of Lebanon, Elias Hraoui, said his country owed the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) a great debt for the many sacrifices it had made in the performance of its mission. He added that the Lebanese army had been deployed side by side with the United Nations peace-keepers with a view to extending the authority of the State. Noting that the transformation in Lebanon was due to the character of the Lebanese people, Mr. Hraoui said much remained to be done to eliminate the effect of crisis, such as the hostage crisis. He stated that Lebanon was determined to cooperate with all to put an end to the crisis.

The President of the Republic of Korea, Roh Tae Woo, recalled that his country had first formally applied for membership 43 years ago. The Korean people, he said, lived under two separate systems, but they had not forgotten that they were one nation. His country would seek national unification peacefully, without the use of military, and on the basis of self-determination, he said.

In his address before the Assembly, Foreign Minister Hans Van Den Broek of the Netherlands, speaking on behalf of the European Community, called on reinforcement from the Security Council to settle the conflict in Yugoslavia. He said the 12 members of the European Community felt that a mandatory arms embargo by the Security Council under Chapter 7 was needed to bring peace to the region.

The Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, BORIS D. PANKIN, said that his country had just gone through a "purifying storm", including the defeat of a "criminal coup", and was on the threshold of a new era in its centuries-old history. He attributed the coup's failure to the recent democratic achievements of Soviet perestroika and the irreversible pro-democracy movement as well as the new relationship between his country and the rest of the world. He expressed deep gratitude to all those who had associated themselves with Soviet resistance to the coup.

The disarmament breakthroughs earlier in the year concerning conventional arms in Europe and strategic nuclear arms had proven that relations between the Soviet Union and the United States were no longer those of adversaries. Another decisive step to end the cold war had been made in an area that was most resistant to new trends -- the economy -- with the meeting of the Soviet

President and the Group of Seven leaders in London, and subsequent contacts. Those developments had set the stage for overcoming the economic division of the world and restoring its integrity, economic interdependence and its financial fabric.

Before the August events, he said, the progress of perestroika inside the country had lagged far behind its international impact. Now, that gap had been closed and his country would never be the same. Where an "ossified empire" had once stood, a new union of free and truly sovereign nations bound together by common aspirations was being born. Democracy, human rights, openness towards each other and to the entire civilized world would be its main frame.

He went on to draw attention to the danger that the ideological division of the world might be replaced by attempts to divide and antagonize countries, peoples and nations on national, ethnic or religious grounds, he said. The result might be the "nineteenth century revisited". The problem was how to make the growing national self-awareness serve the cause of progress, freedom and the prosperity of people.

Also addressing the current conflict in Yugoslavia, the Foreign Minister of France, Roland Dumas, in his address before the General Assembly, said Yugoslavia was heading deeper into an impasse. He said France believed it was incumbent on the United Nations to bring the parties to reason by demanding compliance with the cease-fire, by showing the way to dialogue and to negotiation that had been mapped out with their consent by the European Economic Community (EEC). He said his country, currently holding the Presidency of the Security Council would leave no stone unturned to achieve this end, and would take action at the Council meeting scheduled for tomorrow.

Opening this afternoon's debate, the Foreign Minister of Finland, Paavo Väyrynen, noted that his country -- a consistent supporter of the United Nations peace-keeping activities -- firmly supported the extension of U.N. peace-keeping into new fields, including that of prevention of conflicts.

On the environmental issue, Mr. Väyrynen said that the strongest economic powers, which profit most from world-wide integration, should bear the main responsibility for helping those countries which do not have sufficient possibilities to succeed in this competition.

He announced that the Nordic countries had undertaken a study called "the Nordic UN project", reflecting the desire of those governments to make the system more transparent, responsive and accountable.

Speaking after the Finnish representative, Head of State of Swaziland, King Mswati III, said much still needed to be done to redress the many imbalances evident around the world. He said that as an African Head of State, he felt it was his responsibility to put forward his continent's case, as the economic situation there continues to worsen and the economic divide between North and South continued to widen alarmingly. He pointed to the poor growth rates, huge external debt and low output as part of the demoralizing

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story of Africa, and said the consequences of war, natural disaster and social upheaval all combined to project a gloomy picture.

The King spoke in his capacity as chairman of the 18-nation Preferential Trade Area (PTA), representing some 220 million people.

The President of the Marshall Islands, Amata Kabua, expressed gratitude for the warm reception he had received in the international community as one of the seven new members of the United Nations. He praised the former colonial administrator, the United States, saying his Republic could never have come as far as they had without United States aid and encouragement.

The issue of global warming was a most formidable one, he said, and the consequences could be catastrophic for the low-lying Marshall Islands. He expressed the hope that through the efforts of the United Nations there would be a consensus on the extent of the problem as well as a sound course of action to remedy the effects of global warming.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal, Joao de Deus Pinheiro, told the Assembly that the efforts of an increasing number of countries towards the democratization of their own regimes, progress in the field of human rights and the creation of market economies deserved international recognition. He pointed out that in Africa, a continent to which Portugal was linked historically and culturally, there has been an evolution to which the international community should not remain indifferent -- naming Cape Verde, Sao Tome and Principe as examples of political renewal, and Angola, as a place where peace was now a valuable "fait-accompli".

The Foreign Minister of Japan, Taro Nakayama, declared to the Assembly that the Japanese people were resolutely determined never again to become a military power. He proposed the establishment of a conflict-prevention system based on strengthening the Secretariat's ability to monitor possible conflicts, dispatching on-site fact-finding missions, issuing early warnings as the situation requires, and conducting good offices and mediation efforts under the authority of the Secretary-General.

With the threat of nuclear war having receded and ideological conflict a thing of the past, he said the promotion of development was now the international community's "most important responsibility".

Addressing the General Assembly yesterday afternoon, the President of the Federated States of Micronesia, Bailey Olter -- the leader of one of the seven new UN member States -- expressed his country's concern with nuclear weapon testing in the South Pacific region. He welcomed the decision by France to become a party to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and to sign and ratify the Convention of the South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme. He expressed the hope that France will cease its testing of nuclear weapons in the area.

The Prime Minister of Norway, Gro Harlem Brundtland, focused, in her address yesterday, on the necessity to create economic growth in the

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developing countries. She drew attention to the fact that her country maintained its development assistance in excess of 1 per cent of GDP, the highest in the world. Yet, she said, aid alone can never solve the poverty problem. A sound national economy and implementation of policies of social reform were also necessary, she said.

Speaking on the environmental problems, Mrs. Brundtland indicated that Norway had proposed a cost-effective implementation of targets, set to limit global emissions of green house gases. In her opinion, targets could be reached by States acting individually or in cooperation with other countries.

In his address before the Assembly, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia, Gareth Evans, stressed that his country welcomed in particular the results of recent meetings on Cambodia. It now seemed that no obstacles remained for a signature of a comprehensive settlement in Paris next month.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina, Guido di Tella, said his country was building a sound political stability and could now make long-term plans. He said he was encouraged by the process of integration between Argentina and Brazil. Both States, together with Paraguay, had signed last March in Asuncion a treaty for the establishment of the common market of the South (MERCOSUR) which should be constituted by 31 December 1994. The treaty would become for the Latin American region what the Rome Treaty was for the European Community.

The Foreign Minister of Iran, Ali-Akbar Velayati, addressed recent developments in the Gulf area, saying there was a need for the States of the area to cooperate on a bilateral and regional level, taking into account the mutual respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. He stressed the importance of universal respect for human rights, and said the importance of the human person did not allow for monopoly by a particular system of thought or manipulation for ulterior objectives.

Regarding the question of Afghanistan, he said that issue directly affected the national security of Iran and Pakistan, two countries which had shouldered the heaviest burden by hosting more than 5 million Afghan refugees. Recent joint efforts by Iran, Pakistan and the Afghan Mujahedeen in seeking a just solution to the Afghan problem, was a major step in the right direction.

In his address, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, touching on the economic disparities in the world, said the difference between North and South was increasingly more evident. If the deepening of economic asymmetry between nations was not corrected, it would create instability for all countries.

The Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka, Stanley Kalpage, said the alleviation of poverty was a high priority on his country's agenda of development. It was striving for self-sustaining development aimed at improving living conditions while preserving cultural values derived from its people's traditional religions and philosophies.

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Documents seized by Iraqi officials from UN inspectors yesterday, have been returned to the inspectors with certain important documents missing that were previously identified by the inspection team.

A United Nations spokesman told correspondents at Headquarters that the inspection had continued in Baghdad this morning at a different location, designated by the Special Commission, where administrative records of the Iraqi Atomic Energy Commission were stored. The team had entered the site unhindered and observed "that a substantial amount of documents had been removed previously." However, they had found materials "of singular importance" to enable the Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to reconstruct the Iraqi nuclear programme, in particular records regarding foreign and domestic procurement.

Since the material was not of a character to be removed or destroyed under resolution 687 (1991) -- unlike the plans, designs and blueprints discovered yesterday -- the team agreed to leave it in Iraqi custody, after having recorded and copied it. However, the inspectors were prevented from copying the documents and were detained when they refused to surrender all photographs, films and video tapes and all copies of Iraqi documents.

The Chairman of the Special Commission, Ambassador Rolf Ekeus, has notified the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council of the situation.

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The United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL), established on 26 July by the Security Council to verify the observance of human rights in that country, has come out with its first report.

The Director of ONUSAL's Human Rights Division, Philippe Texier, says in the report that the persistence of the armed conflict in El Salvador and its recent escalation are creating a considerable amount of tension which is affecting the fundamental rights of the people. He says the present report was prepared during the Mission's preparatory phase and does not therefore attempt to analyse the human rights situation in El Salvador in depth, but rather to establish a basis for future reports.

According to the report, the absence of a cease-fire was complicating the Mission's verification task in a variety of ways. One complication, clearly, was a juridical one related to the verification, in the midst of an armed conflict, of an agreement conceived for a peace-time situation. In addition, the report said, the need to protect members of the Mission in a situation of armed conflict complicated the verification of the agreement.

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